

(c) the expenditure incurred in the renovation and modernisation of the Bhuj Head Post Office on its completion?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Estimated cost Rs. 366265/-

Actual Expenditure Rs. 359090./-

(c) Expenditure on modernisation by way of installation of entergrated computer system etc. has been Rs. 449076.00.

Expenditure on maintenance and repairs has been Rs. 264571.00

Out of Order Satellite Centres

2974. SHRI VISHVESHWAR BHAGAT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some satellite Centres in rural areas are lying out of order;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the locations thereof; and

(c) the remedial measures taken in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) to (c) One MCPC terminal in Tuting in Arunachal Pradesh is lying faulty since 10th Feb., 1997. As the place is only approachable by helicopter the maintenance staff is waiting in readiness at Dibrugarh and will reach the site as soon as the local authorities make the helicopter available.

Development of Railway in Orissa

2975. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Orissa has recently submitted a memorandum to him for development and expansion of railways in the State;

(b) whether the Union Government are aware of the inadequate railway infrastructure in Orissa in Comparison with the neighbouring States in the South-Eastern railway; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to consider the request of the Government of Orissa in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Memorandum has been received on 6.3.97 and all the demands contained in it are receiving the attention of

the Government. Action to be taken on each of the demands would be decided shortly.

[Translation]

Air Services

2976. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to introduce air services from Patna to Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and vice-versa daily;

(b) the places from which Patna is connected with daily, weekly flights at present and the future programme for linking it with other airports;

(c) whether there is any scheme to upgrade the Patna airport to an International Airport; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) Indian Airlines/Alliance Air are operating daily flights between Delhi-Patna - Ranch and thrice a week flights between Calcutta - Ranchi - Patna - Mumbai and Calcutta - Patna - Lucknow - Delhi. Druk Air is operating a twice a week flights between Patna - Calcutta and a weekly flight between Patna - Delhi and Sahara India Airlines is operating from Patna Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai & Mumbai. NEPC indicated its intention to connect Patna with Calcutta by a twice a week flight in the summer schedule. At present, Indian Airlines has no plans to link other cities with Patna.

(c) and (d) Presently there is no scheme to upgrade Patna Airport to international status due to lack of adequate international passenger traffic and limited length of runway. However, being a model airport, it can handle limited international traffic.

[English]

Air Service from Bangalore to Dubai and Muscat

2977. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air Service from Bangalore to Dubai and Muscat has started recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is great demand for providing air links to many other important cities of the world from Bangalore; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?